

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3892

INFO USCINSCO QUARRY HTS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 3781

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PA

SUBJECT: MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND PARAGUAY

REF: STATE 203286

1. MISSION APPRECIATES OPPORTUNITY TO WEIGH IN ON MATTERS COVERED REFTEL AND HOPES DEPT. WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TIMELY INFORMATION ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES.

2. FMS CASH PURCHASES AND MUNITIONS CONTROL ITEMS. EMBASSY HAD PREVIOUSLY RECOMMENDED DENIAL OF AMMO REQUEST FOR PARAGUAYAN POLICE AND SUPPORTS DEPARTMENT'S INTENTION TO DENY IT. REGARDING FMS CASH PURCHASES, EMBASSY WOULD RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF REQUESTS FOR SPARE PARTS, P AND A DATA AND EXCESS EQUIPMENT IN GENERAL. WE SUPPORT A CASE-BY-CASE LOOK AT MUNITIONS CONTROL ITEMS WHICH COULD BE CONSIDERED IN THE "LETHAL CATEGORY" OR HAVE A POTENTIAL FOR USE AGAINST THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AND WILL PROVIDE OUR RECOMMENDATIONS AS CASES ARE FORWARDED.

3. PARAGUAYAN ATTENDANCE AT NAVAL COMMAND COURSE. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT DEPT. MAKE AVAILABLE FY 79 IMET FUNDS TO COVER THE COST OF THE NAVAL COMMAND COURSE SO THAT AN INVITATION TO ATTEND CAN BE PROFERRED TO THE GOP IF WE WISH TO MAKE A TIMELY U.S. GESTURE TO THE PARAGUAYANS. FAILURE TO NOTIFY EMBASSY OF THE
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DEPT'S DECISION TO CANCEL PRAGUAYAN ATTENDANCE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS REASONS HAS MEANT THAT THE PARAGUAYANS WERE NEVER INFORMED OF THE DECISION UNTIL AFTER THE ISSUES, WHICH WE HAD HOPED TO INFLUENCE BY THE ACTION, HAD BEEN RESOLVED OR HAD BEEN ALTERED CONSIDERABLY. NOW THAT THE PARAGUAYAN MILITARY ARE AWARE OF THE CONNECTION, DEPT'S SUGGESTION THAT THE NAVAL COMMAND COURSE MAY BE AVAILABLE IN JANUARY PROVIDES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A

DIRECT, POSITIVE GESTURE TO THE GOP IF HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS
CONTINUE TO IMPROVE.

4. FY 76 FMS. WE HAVE URGED THE GOP TO PAY THE UNPAID BALANCE OF
THE INSTALLMENT DUE JULY 31. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE INTEREST
DUE HAS BEEN PAID IN FULL BUT THAT ONLY A \$45,000 SEMI-ANNUAL
PAYMENT AGAINST THE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT WAS MADE AS THE DEFENSE
MINISTRY HAS DIFFCULTY MAKING PAYMENTS BASED ON \$500,00 WHEN THE
ACTUAL EXPENDED AMOUNT IS ABOUT \$400,000. THIS IS BECAUSE OF
INTERNAL ACCOUNTING PROBLEMS. IF WE HAD RECEIVED INFORMATION
EARLIER, ODC COULD HAVE ANSWERED THE GOP'S QUESTIONS AND MIGHT
HAVE BEEN ABLE TO COUNTER THE PARAGUAYANS' IMPRESSION THAT THE
CREDIT HAD BEEN FROZEN. EARLIER WE HAD TOLD THE PARAGUAYANS
THAT THE USG WOULD NOT SIGN AN EXTENSION TO THE FY 76 FMS
CREDIT UNLESS CERTAIN HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS WERE OVERCOME
BEFORE THAT DATE. THE PARAGUAYAN ARMY OFFICER IN THE WASHINGTON
EMBASSY, WAS CORRECT, THEREFORE, WHEN HE SAID THE GOP WOULDN'T
BE ALLOWED TO USE THE REMAINING CREDIT UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH
EXISTED AT THAT TIME. WE WOULD RECOMMEND, THEREFORE, THAT DSAA
AGREE TO A REVISED REPAYMENT SCHEDULE BASED ON THE PRINCIPAL
EXPENDED, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, BECAUSE THE USG TOOK THE
INITIATIVE TO DENY THE REMAINING CREDITS.
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